

REMARKS

A second request for continued examination was filed in this case on December 30, 2003. Presumably, such request was received at the Patent Office on January 2, 2004. The Office Action Summary provided with the Office Action indicates that the Office Action is responsive to "communication(s) filed on 2 January 2004".

Applicants point this out because a Preliminary Amendment was filed by Applicants on May 11, 2004. A postcard received by Applicants indicates that such Preliminary Amendment was received at the Patent Office on May 17, 2004. However, based on the statement quoted above from the Office Action Summary, it appears that such Preliminary Amendment was not entered. Accordingly, Applicants proceed with this Response based on the assumption that the May 11, 2004 Preliminary Amendment was not entered in this case.

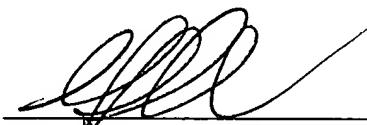
On that basis, Claims 55-78 and 85-89 were presented for examination. Claims 66-71 and 75-78 stand allowed. Claims 55-65, 72-74 and 85-89 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gates (5,701,409) in view of Carlsson et al (4,053,947).

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowability regarding claims 66-71 and 75-78. The remaining claims have been canceled in order to put the Application in condition for allowance. Claim 69 has been amended to correct a typographical error. Such change is not made for reasons of patentability. Two additional new claims, Claims 90 and 91 have been added. These two claims were originally presented in the May 11, 2004 Preliminary Amendment that presumably was not entered. These two new claims depend from Claim 75, which has been indicated allowable. At least for the reason that the new claims 90 and 91 add additional limitations to an already-allowed claim, they are also in condition for allowance.

Applicants' cancellation of Claims 55-65, 72-74 and 85-89 is made in order to put the remaining claims of the Application into condition for allowance. Such cancellation should in no way be taken as an acquiescence to the statements of official notice or the "implicit teachings" of Gates. Applicants hereby reserve the right to traverse, in any future continuation application, any statements of official notice or implicit teachings.

All remaining claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants reserve all rights with respect to the application of the doctrine equivalents. Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Please charge any shortages and credit any overcharges to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,



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